

What is a geologist?

Geologists study the earth and its processes, history, and composition. Geology is the applied science of using this comprehensive knowledge of the earth for the benefit of humankind.

To qualify as a professional geologist in Kentucky, a person must be a graduate of an accredited institution of higher education with a minimum of 30 semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) in geology and have 5 years experience in professional geology. All geologists registered since January 10, 1994, must also have successfully passed a professional examination.

Only geologists registered by the Kentucky Board of Registration for Professional Geologists may engage in the public practice of geology in Kentucky.

What does a geologist do?

Geologists conduct investigations and provide interpretative geologic services related to ground water, mineral exploration and development, mine reclamation, foundation conditions, dam and highway construction, subsurface migration of contamination, disposal of hazardous waste, geologic hazards, origin of geologic features, land use, and much more. Geologic interpretations and applications of geologic principles are integral parts of many actions concerning public health, safety, and welfare.

Geologists often work in conjunction with engineers, who use geologists' interpretations to aid in design and construction of safe structures, pipelines, and buildings.



Photo by Steve Greb, KGS

Geologists in Kentucky provide advice on:

- Mapping of strata and geologic units
- Ground-water supply
- Safe home and building sites
- Site investigation of Civil construction projects
- Exploration, for and evaluation of mineral properties, including energy fuels
- Analysis and treatment of hazardous materials and waste sites
- Exploration for and development of aggregate and building material deposits
- Regulatory and Industrial compliance
- Federal and State permitting

How do I hire a professional geologist?

To find a qualified professional geologist:

1. Check the yellow pages; ask the local geologic professional associations or the Board of Registration for the roster of registered geologists. The roster is available on the Web at the URL found on the front of this brochure.
2. Check with the Board of Registration to see if the geologist you wish to hire is registered.
3. Check with former clients and ask their opinion of the quality of the geologist's work.
4. Have a written contract that specifies the terms and performance expected and include the time frame. If the geologist asks for a retainer, know its purpose and whether it will be applied to the bill or charged separately.

What is the role of the Kentucky Board of Registration for Professional Geologists?

The Board is an agency of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and is funded solely by fees charged by the Board to applicants and registered geologists. The Board receives no General Fund tax money.

The purpose of the board is to license geologists to enhance public protection. The board sets and enforces minimum standards of competence in the public practice of geology.

The Board:

1. Establishes that an applicant has met or exceeded statutory levels of education, experience, and knowledge prior to being registered as a professional geologist.
2. Deters negligent, incompetent, or fraudulent practices through disciplinary action.
3. Promotes good practice through a code of ethics, rules, and legislation.

Who serves on the Kentucky Board of Registration for Professional Geologists?

The Board consists of four qualified geologists and one at-large member, all appointed by the Governor.

What if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint about a geologist, professional geologist, or someone purporting to be a geologist, or wish further information about the Board's authority or requirements, contact the Board at the address on the front of this brochure.

Disputes over fees will not be investigated by the Board unless negligence, incompetence, or fraud are indicated.



Photo by John D. Kiefer, KGS

Where do I get geological information about Kentucky?

Geological Surveys

The Kentucky Geological Survey (KGS) is a separate State agency that provides information, maps, and publications about geology, hydrology, and mineral resources. The State Geologist directs the KGS, which is located on the campus of the University of Kentucky, 228 Mining and Mineral Resources Building, Rose Street, Lexington, KY 40506-0107, telephone (859) 257-5500.

The Kentucky district office of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is located in Louisville, and may be reached at (502) 493-1900.

Universities

Six state universities offer geology programs and maintain geological libraries:

- University of Kentucky
- Western Kentucky University
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Morehead State University
- Northern Kentucky University
- Murray State University

Professional Societies

Several professional societies are active in Kentucky; the largest are the Kentucky Society of Professional Geologists (KSPG) and the Kentucky section of the American Institute of Professional

Geologists (AIPG). Contact the State Geologist at the Kentucky Geological Survey for more information on these and other societies and organizations.

Government Agencies

For local information, contact county or city planning and building departments.

State agencies managing natural resources are the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet and the Kentucky Department of Mines and Minerals. Federal agencies include the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Forest Service, both of which have offices throughout Kentucky.

Internet Resources

To search for geological information on the World Wide Web, go to the home page of the Kentucky Board of Registration for Professional Geologists. The URL for this Web site can be found on the front of this brochure. Links to most of the organizations mentioned in this brochure can be found there.

“Kygeologist” is a listserv about geology in Kentucky, sponsored by the Kentucky Society of Professional Geologists. Anyone, whether amateur, student, teacher, or professional geologist, may join and it’s free. Discussion topics may range from general geology questions, to meeting information, to professional techniques. Subscribing is easy: visit the KSPG Web site to find out how.



Photo by James C. Currens

Sinkholes are common in Kentucky's landscape, but can be dangerous if structures are built over them.

Consumer Guide **to** **Geological** **Services**



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